# Tafsir Ibn Kathir

ذَلِكَ الْكِتَابُ لاَ رَيْبَ فِيهِ هُدًى لِّلْمُتَّقِينَ

This is the Book; in it is guidance sure, without doubt, to those who fear Allah

# Al-Shams

**Revealed in Makkah**

## Recitation of Surah Ash-Shams in the Isha' Prayer

The Hadith of Jabir which was recorded in the Two Sahihs has already been mentioned. In it the Messenger of Allah said to Muadh, Why didn't you pray with the recitation of,

سَبِّحِ اسْمَ رَبِّكَ الاٌّعْلَى

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَـهَا

وَالَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَى

(Glorify the Name of your Lord the Most High) (Surah 87),

(By the sun and Duhaha) (Surah 91), and

(By the night as it envelops) (Surah 92)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَـنِ الرَّحِيمِ

**In the Name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful.**

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا

**91:1 By the sun and Duhaha.**

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا

**91:2 By the moon as it Talaha.**

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا

**91:3 By the day as it Jallaha.**

وَاللَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَاهَا

**91:4 By the night as it Yaghshaha.**

وَالسَّمَاءِ وَمَا بَنَاهَا

**91:5 By the heaven and Ma Banaha.**

وَالْأَرْضِ وَمَا طَحَاهَا

**91:6 By the earth and Ma Tahhaha.**

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

**91:7 By Nafs, and Ma Sawwaha (Who apportioned it).**

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

**91:8 Then He showed it its Fujur and its Taqwa.**

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا

**91:9 Indeed he succeeds who purifies it.**

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا

**91:10 And indeed he fails who Dassaha.**

## Allah swears by His Creation that the Person Who purifies Himself will be Successful and the Person Who corrupts Himself will fail

وَالشَّمْسِ وَضُحَاهَا (١)

By the sun and **Duhaha**.

Mujahid said, "This means, by its light.''

Qatadah said, وَضُحَـهَا **wa Duhaha.** "The whole day.''

Ibn Jarir said,

> "The correct view is what has been said, `Allah swears by the sun and its daytime, because the clear light of the sun is daytime.'''

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَاهَا (٢)

By the moon as it **Talaha**.

Mujahid said, "It follows it (the sun).''

Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn Abbas that he said,

وَالْقَمَرِ إِذَا تَلَـهَا By the moon as it **Talaha**. "It follows the day.''

Qatadah said, "`as it **Talaha** (follows it)'

> is referring to the night of the **Hilal** (the new crescent moon). When the sun goes down, the **Hilal** is visible.''

Concerning Allah's statement,

وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّاهَا (٣)

By the day as it **Jallaha**.

Mujahid said, "When it illuminates.''

Thus, Mujahid said, وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا جَلَّـهَا By the day as it Jallaha.

> "This is similar to Allah's statement, وَالنَّهَارِ إِذَا تَجَلَّى By the day as it **Tajalla**. (92:2)''

And they have said concerning Allah's statement,

وَالَّيْلِ إِذَا يَغْشَـهَا (٤)

By the night as it **Yaghshaha**.

meaning, when it covers the sun, which takes place when sun disappears and the horizons become dark.

Concerning Allah's statement,

وَالسَّمَآءِ وَمَا بَنَـهَا (٥)

By the heaven and **Ma Banaha**.

The meaning here could be for descriptive purposes, meaning "By the heaven and its construction.''

This was said by Qatadah.

It could also mean "By the heaven and its Constructor.''

This was stated by Mujahid.

Both views are interrelated, and construction means raising.

This is as Allah says,

وَالسَّمَآءَ بَنَيْنَـهَا بِأَيْدٍ With Hands did We construct the heaven. (51:47)

meaning, with strength.

وَالسَّمَآءَ بَنَيْنَـهَا بِأَيْدٍ وَإِنَّا لَمُوسِعُونَ

وَالاٌّرْضَ فَرَشْنَـهَا فَنِعْمَ الْمَـهِدُونَ

Verily, We are able to extend the vastness of space thereof. And We have spread out the earth: how excellent a spreader are We! (51:47-48)

This is also similar to Allah's statement,

وَالاٌّرْضِ وَمَا طَحَـهَا (٦)

By the earth and Ma **Tahaha**.

Mujahid said,

"**Tahaha** means He spread it out.''

Al-`Awfi reported from Ibn `Abbas that he said, **وَمَا طَحَـهَا** (and **Ma Tahaha.**),

"This means what He created in it.'' `

Ali bin Abi Talhah reported from Ibn Abbas that he said,

"**Tahaha** means that He proportioned it.''

Mujahid, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak, As-Suddi, Ath-Thawri, Abu Salih and Ibn Zayd all said that طَحَـهَا (**Tahaha**) means, He spread it out.

Allah then says,

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا (٧)

By **Nafs**, and **Ma Sawwaha** (Who apportioned it).

meaning, He created it sound and well-proportioned upon the correct nature **(Al-Fitrah)**.

This is as Allah says,

فَأَقِمْ وَجْهَكَ لِلدِّينِ حَنِيفاً فِطْرَةَ اللَّهِ الَّتِى فَطَرَ النَّاسَ عَلَيْهَا لاَ تَبْدِيلَ لِخَلْقِ اللَّهِ

So set you your face towards the religion, **Hanif**. Allah's **Fitrah** with which He has created mankind. No change let there be in the **Khalqillah**. (30:30)

The Messenger of Allah said,

كُلُّ مَوْلُودٍ يُولَدُ عَلى الْفِطْرَةِ فَأَبَوَاهُ يُهَوِّدَانِهِ أَوْ يُنَصِّرَانِهِ أَوْ يُمَجِّسَانِهِ،

كَمَا تُولَدُ الْبَهِيمَةُ بَهِيمَةً جَمْعَاءَ، هَلْ تُحِسُّونَ فِيهَا مِنْ جَدْعَاءَ؟

Every child that is born, is born upon the **Fitrah**, but his parents make him a Jew, a Christian, or a Zoroastrian.

This is just as the animal is born, complete with all of its parts. Do you notice any mutilation in it?

Both Al-Bukhari and Muslim recorded this Hadith from Abu Hurayrah.

In Sahih Muslim, it has been narrated from `Iyad bin Himar Al-Mujashi`i that the Messenger of Allah said,

يَقُولُ اللهُ عَزَّ وَجَلَّ:

إِنِّي خَلَقْتُ عِبَادِي حُنَفَاءَ فَجَاءَتْهُمُ الشَّيَاطِينُ فَاجْتَالَتْهُمْ عَنْ دِينِهِم

Allah the Mighty and Majestic says,

> "Verily I created My servants **Hunafa**' (as monotheists), but then the devils came to them and distracted them from their religion.''

Then Allah says,

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا (٨)

Then He showed it its **Fujur** and its **Taqwa**.

meaning, He showed him to his transgression and his **Taqwa**.

> This means that He clarified that for it and He guided it to what has been ordained for him.

Ibn `Abbas said, **فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا** (Then He showed it its **Fujur** and its **Taqwa)**.

> "He explained the good and the evil to it (the soul).''

Mujahid, Qatadah, Ad-Dahhak and Ath-Thawri all said the same.

Sa`id bin Jubayr said,

> "He gave him inspiration (to see what was) good and evil.''

Ibn Zayd said,

> "He made its **Fujur** and its **Taqwa** inside of it.''

Ibn Jarir recorded from Abul-Aswad Ad-Dili that he said, "`Imran bin Husayn said to me,

> `Do you think that what the people do, and what they strive for is a thing that is pre-ordained and predestined for them,

or is it a thing which is only written after the Message comes to them from the Prophet, when there will be an evidence against them'

I said, `Rather it is something preordained upon them.'

Then he said, `Is that an injustice'

Then I became extremely frightened of him (due to what he was saying), and I said to him,

`There is nothing except that He (Allah) created it and possesses it in His Hand. He is not asked about what He does, while they (His creation) will be asked.'

He (`Imran) then said,

`May Allah guide you! I only asked you about that in order to inform you that a man from Muzaynah or Juhaynah tribe came to the Allah's Messenger and asked him:

"O Messenger of Allah! Do you consider the actions of mankind and their struggles to be preordained for them and written for them from **Qadr**, or something written for them only after the Message came to them from their Prophet, when there will be an evidence against them''

He (the Prophet ) replied:

بَلْ شَيْءٌ قَدْ قُضِيَ عَلَيْهِم

Rather it is something preordained for them.

So the man said, "Then what is the point of our actions''

The Prophet replied,

مَنْ كَانَ اللهُ خَلَقَهُ لِإِحْدَى الْمَنْزِلَتَيْنِ يُهَيِّئُهُ لَهَا،

وَتَصْدِيقُ ذَلِكَ فِي كِتَابِ اللهِ تَعَالَى:

Whoever Allah created for one of the two positions (Paradise or Hell), He makes it easy for him (to attain).

The proof of that is in the Book of Allah.

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

(By **Nafs**, and Ma **Sawwaha** (Who apportioned it).

Then He showed it its **Fujur** and its **Taqwa**).)''

Ahmad and Muslim both recorded this Hadith.

Allah then says,

قَدْ أَفْلَحَ مَن زَكَّاهَا (٩)

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّاهَا (١٠)

Indeed he succeeds who purifies it. And indeed he fails who **Dassaha**.

This could mean that whoever purifies himself by obedience to Allah, then he will be successful.

This is as Qatadah said,

"He cleanses it from the lowly and despicable characteristics.''

Similar to this has been reported from Mujahid, `Ikrimah and Sa`id bin Jubayr.

وَقَدْ خَابَ مَن دَسَّـهَا

And indeed he fails who **Dassaha**.

meaning, to conceal it.

This means that he makes it dull, and he disregards it by neglecting to allow it to receive guidance. He treats it in this manner until he performs acts of disobedience and he abandons obedience of Allah.

It also could mean that he is indeed successful whose soul Allah purifies, and he has failed whose soul Allah corrupts.

This is like what was reported by Al-`Awfi and `Ali bin Abi Talhah from Ibn `Abbas.

At-Tabarani recorded that Ibn `Abbas said,

"The Messenger of Allah used to stop whenever he recited this Ayah,

وَنَفْسٍ وَمَا سَوَّاهَا

فَأَلْهَمَهَا فُجُورَهَا وَتَقْوَاهَا

> By **Nafs**, and **Ma Sawwaha** (Who apportioned it).
>
> Then He showed it its **Fujur** and its **Taqwa**.

Then he would say,

اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا، وَخَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا

> O Allah! Give my soul its good. You are its Guardian and Master, and the best to purify it.''

Another Hadith Imam Ahmad recorded that Zayd bin Arqam said that the Messenger of Allah said,

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنَ الْعَجْزِ وَالْكَسَلِ، وَالْهَرَمِ وَالْجُبْنِ وَالْبُخْلِ وَعَذَابِ الْقَبْرِ.

اللَّهُمَّ آتِ نَفْسِي تَقْوَاهَا، وَزَكِّهَا أَنْتَ خَيْرُ مَنْ زَكَّاهَا، أَنْتَ وَلِيُّهَا وَمَوْلَاهَا.

اللَّهُمَّ إِنِّي أَعُوذُ بِكَ مِنْ قَلْبٍ لَا يَخْشَعُ، وَمِنْ نَفْسٍ لَا تَشْبَعُ، وَعِلْمٍ لَا يَنْفَعُ، وَدَعْوَةٍ لَا يُسْتَجَابُ لَهَا

> O Allah!
>
> Verily, I seek refuge with You from weakness, laziness, senility (of old age), cowardliness, stinginess and the torment of the grave.
>
> O Allah!
>
> Give my soul its good and purify it, for You are the best to purify it. You are its Guardian and Master.
>
> O Allah!
>
> Verily, I seek refuge with You from a heart that is not humble, a soul that is not satisfied,

knowledge that does not benefit and a supplication that is not answered.

Zayd then said,

"The Messenger of Allah used to teach us these (words) and we now teach them to you.''

Muslim also recorded this Hadith.

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا

**91:11 Thamud denied through their transgression.**

إِذِ انبَعَثَ أَشْقَاهَا

**91:12 When their most wicked went forth.**

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ وَسُقْيَاهَا

**91:13 But the Messenger of Allah said to them: "Be cautious! That is the she-camel of Allah! (Do not harm it) and (bar it not from having) its drink!''**

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذَنبِهِمْ فَسَوَّاهَا

**91:14 Then they denied him and they killed it. So their Lord destroyed them because of their sin, Fasawwaha!**

وَلَا يَخَافُ عُقْبَاهَا

**91:15 And He feared not the consequences thereof.**

## The Rejection of Thamud and Allah's Destruction of Them

Allah informs:

كَذَّبَتْ ثَمُودُ بِطَغْوَاهَا (١١)

Thamud denied through their transgression.

Allah informs that Thamud rejected their Messenger because of the injustice and transgression they practiced.

This was said by Mujahid, Qatadah and others.

Therefore, this resulted in a rejection in their hearts for the guidance and conviction their Messenger came to them with.

إِذِ انبَعَثَ أَشْقَـهَا (١٢)

When their most wicked went forth.

meaning, the most wicked person of the tribe, and he was Qudar bin Salif, the one who killed the she-camel. He was leader of the tribe of Thamud, and he is the one whom Allah refers to in His saying,

فَنَادَوْاْ صَـحِبَهُمْ فَتَعَاطَى فَعَقَرَ

But they called their comrade and he took (a sword) and killed (her). (54:29)

This man was mighty and respected among his people. He was of noble lineage and a leader who was obeyed.

This is just as Imam Ahmad recorded from `Abdullah bin Zam`ah. He said that the Messenger of Allah gave a sermon in which he mentioned the she-camel and he mentioned the man who killed her. Then he said, إِذِ انبَعَثَ أَشْقَـهَا (When their most wicked went forth.)

انْبَعَثَ لَهَا رَجُلٌ عَارِمٌ عَزِيزٌ مَنِيعٌ فِي رَهْطِهِ مِثْلُ أَبِي زَمْعَة

A strong and mighty man who was invincible among his tribe, like Abu Zam`ah, went forth to her.

This Hadith was recorded by Al-Bukhari in his Book of Tafsir, and Muslim in his Book of the Description of the Hellfire.

At-Tirmidhi and An-Nasa'i both recorded it in their Sunans in their Books of Tafsir.

## The Story of Salih's She-Camel

Allah then says,

فَقَالَ لَهُمْ رَسُولُ اللَّهِ ...

But the Messenger of Allah said to them (referring to Salih).

... نَاقَةَ اللَّهِ ...

That is the she-camel of Allah!

meaning, `beware of touching the she-camel of Allah with any harm.'

.... وَسُقْيَاهَا (١٣)

and its drink!

meaning, `do not transgress against her in her drinking, for she has been allocated a day to drink and you have been allocated a day to drink, as is known to you.'

Then Allah says,

فَكَذَّبُوهُ فَعَقَرُوهَا ...

Then they denied him and they killed it.

which means they rejected what he came with. This resulted in them killing the she-camel that Allah had brought out of the rock as a sign for them and a proof against them.

... فَدَمْدَمَ عَلَيْهِمْ رَبُّهُم بِذَنبِهِمْ ...

So their Lord destroyed them because of their sin,

meaning, He became angry with them and He annihilated them.

... فَسَوَّاهَا (١٤)

**Fasawwaha**!

meaning, He made the punishment descend upon them all equally.

Qatadah said,

"It has reached us that the leader of tribe of Thamud did not kill the she-camel until their youth, their elderly, their males and their females all pledged allegiance to him. So when the people cooperated in killing her, Allah destroyed them all with the same punishment due to their sin.''

Allah said,

وَلَا يَخَافُ ...

And He feared not,

it has also been recited as **(فَلَا يَخَافُ)** (So He feared not)

... عُقْبَاهَا (١٥)

the consequences thereof.

Ibn `Abbas said,

"Allah does not fear any consequences from anyone else.''

Mujahid, Al-Hasan, Bakr bin `Abdullah Al-Muzani and others all said the same.

This is the end of the Tafsir of Surah **Al-Shams**, and all praise and thanks are due to Allah.